Abstract

A method and apparatus for assessing a communications' network adherence to Service Level Agreements (SLAs) is presented. The apparatus includes a arrival curve parameter derivation and arrival curve parameter reporting means. A arrival curve parameter generator may be implemented either in hardware for a predefined response in fitting arrival curves to cumulative content arrival variations, or in software for flexibility in the content traffic considered for assessment. The arrival curve generator may be associated with a physical port, a line card, or a network node. Arrival curve parameters defining arrival curves are employed by a Network Management System (NMS) in conjunction with communications network node and communications network service curves in performing SLA conformance assessments. The advantages are derived from a distributed content traffic characterization in terms of arrival curves, a reduced resource overhead in conveying arrival curve parameters without sacrificing SLA assessment thoroughness.